

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the 4th paragraph, line 21, page 14 with the following amended paragraph:

A preliminary ~~The first~~ step 401 consists in establishing a lay-out on the surface of the lay-up 20 for the pieces to be cut out. Figure 5A shows an example of a lay-out on the front (or downstream) portion of the lay-up, with only pieces A to K being shown. An origin for the X and Y co-ordinates is set arbitrarily on the lay-up at a point O, at the vertex of the angle formed by the front edge 20c and by a longitudinal edge 20a of the lay-up.

Please replace the 4th paragraph, line 27, page 18 with the following amended paragraph:

the vertices of nooks are sought going from one side of the lay-up (e.g. the side 20b[[209]]) to the middle portion, and then going from the opposite side of the lay-up;

Please replace the 4th paragraph, line 25, page 20 with the following amended paragraph:

For each piece or skeleton portion, Figure 5F diagrammatically shows the initial portion of the slide direction and, in parentheses ~~brackets~~, the take-off rank.

Please replace the 3rd paragraph, line 10, page 23 with the following amended paragraph:

The valve 99 is opened to put the cup under suction after the unloading tool is applied against the pick-up location on a stack of pieces 24 to be unloaded and before it arrives above the corresponding bin, e.g. 74b, by following the pat T<sub>1</sub> (Figure 10). Under the effect of the

suction, the fraction 31 of airtight film remains in contact with the cup 90 after the pieces have fallen into the collector bin, and it can be brought to a removal bin, e.g. the bin 70b [[70a]] for removing skeleton fragments from the lay-up, by guiding the unloading tool over a path  $T_2$  between the bins 74b and 70b [[70a]]. When the tool has arrived above the bin 70b [[70a]], the valve 99 is closed, thereby interrupting the suction and releasing the fraction 31 of film. The tool is then brought in the raised position to vertically above a new stack of pieces to be unloaded (path  $T_3$ ) or vertically above a fragment of lay-up skeleton to be removed.